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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 005065

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PNAT](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: PRELIMINARY RESULTS POINT TO BIG SHIA ALLIANCE VICTORY; ALLAWI FARING POORLY

REF: BAGHDAD 4778

Classified By: Political Counselor Robert S. Ford for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Initial election returns from most of Iraq released on December 19 showed the Shia Islamist Coalition breezing towards a strong showing, while the list of former Prime Minister Allawi was scoring much lower than it had hoped, especially in its home base of Baghdad. The Sunni Tawaffuq list was easily besting other Sunni Arab lists, but its leaders on December 20 threatened to boycott the next assembly due to what they alleged was massive fraud on December 15. The Kurds, meanwhile, are scoring about as expected. Unless the election commission greatly changes the results as a result of fraud investigations, the Shia list will likely reach nearly 130 seats in the 275 member Iraqi parliament. Thus, the Shia Islamist coalition could conceivably join with the Kurds in a replay of the April 2005 deal to stand up an Iraqi government around a Shia-Kurd axis. We are urging the Allawi, Tawaffuq and Kurdish lists to join as a bloc before negotiating with the Shia list about the next government.

¶2. (U) In a December 19 press conference, the IECI announced partial counts for 11 governorates representing 162 of the 230 directly elected seats for the Council of Representatives. Warning that these results were still subject to change and only represented partial counts, the IECI read out 76-98 percent counts for each of the 11 governorates:

-- Babil - 11 seats - 95 percent complete
-- Baghdad - 59 seats - 89 percent complete
-- Basrah - 16 seats - 98 percent complete
-- Dahuk - 7 seats - 93 percent complete
-- Erbil - 13 seats - 76 percent complete
-- Karbala - 6 seats - completion percentage not announced
-- Maysan - 7 seats - 98 percent complete
-- Najaf - 8 seats - percentage completion not announced
-- Salahaddin - 8 seats - 89 percent complete
-- Sulaymaniyah - 15 seats - 98 percent complete
-- Thi Qar - 12 seats - 98 percent complete

¶3. (SBU) Extrapolating the data, Post estimates the following seat allocation for those 162 seats:

-- Shia Alliance (List 555) - 87 seats
-- Kurdish Alliance (List 730) - 32 seats
-- National Iraqi List (List 731) - 16 seats
-- Tawaffuq (List 618) - 16 seats
-- Kurdistan Islamic Union (List 561) - 4 seats
-- National Dialogue (List 667) - 3 seats
-- Al-Rissaliyun (List 631) - 1 seat
-- Mithal al-Alusi (List 620) - 1 seat
-- Al-Rafidain (List 740) - 1 seat
-- Liberation and Reconciliation (List 516) - 1 seat

Among the notable absences is the Ahmed Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress (List 569).

Shia Islamist Opponents Most Unhappy

¶4. (C) A dejected outgoing National Assembly Speaker Hajim al-Hasani, who was the number two on Allawi's Baghdad list, told PolCouns the evening of December 19 that the initial numbers looked very bad for Allawi. He said the poor score in Baghdad was a big blow to the List 731's national hopes. He seemed little interested in PolCouns' advice that Hasani move to coalition talks with the Kurds and Sunni Arabs. Hasani opined that Allawi himself might disengage after such a bad showing. On December 20 the leaders of the Sunni Arab Tawaffuq Front stormed to us that their relatively weak showing compared to the Shia Islamist List could only be the result of fraud. They threatened not to participate in the next assembly if the election commission did not reverse the results. Ambassador said we would urge the election commission and UN to take allegations of fraud seriously and to investigate thoroughly. He cautioned them also not to slam the door on participation in the next government, as such participation would be the best way to protect their own interests. (See septels for fuller readout of both Shia Islamist reactions

and those from the Sunni Arab Tawaffuq list.)

Analysis

15. (SBU) Under the calculations above, the Shia Alliance has done very well, while Ayad Allawi's National Iraqi List has performed much worse than it anticipated. The National Iraqi List perceived Baghdad as its main base, and hoped for good results from Basrah too (see ref, for example). Instead, Allawi's list appears to be finishing third in Baghdad with less than 14 percent of the vote, much less than 30 percent they had anticipated the day after the election. Allawi supporters had relied heavily on winning a substantial portion of their expected seats in Baghdad - instead it appears that they will only obtain 8 Baghdad seats. Rather than Allawi eating into the vote for the Shia Alliance, it appears that Arab Sunnis ate into the vote for Allawi.

16. (C) Giving this poor showing, it will be difficult for Allawi's National Iraqi List to garner the 40 seats they believed necessary for Ayad Allawi to become prime minister. Speaking privately with the Ambassador December 20, Tareq al-Hashemi, from the Sunni Arab Tawaffuq list, agreed that a coalition between the Kurds and Allawi list would be useful, but he doubted Allawi should be the leader of that coalition given his poor showing so far (see septel).

17. (U) The IECI has yet to announce results for seven governorates with a combined 68 directly elected seats between them:

Anbar - 9 seats
Diyala - 10 seats
Muthana - 5 seats
Ninewa - 19 seats
Qadissiyah - 8 seats
Kirkuk - 9 seats
Wasit - 8 seats

18. (C) The Shia Alliance can be expected to pick almost all of the seats in Muthana, Qadissiyah, and Wasit, and win a few seats between Ninewa and Diyala to reach about 110 directly elected seats. The National Iraqi List can be expected to win a few seats in the remaining southern governorates, Anbar, Diyala, and Ninewa to maybe reach about 25 seats from the provinces. The Sunni Tawaffuq likely will pick up the vast majority of seats in Anbar and Ninewa, as well as some in Diyala, to secure 35 - 40 seats. The Kurds will win the majority of seats in Kirkuk and some in Ninewa and Diyala to reach about 50 seats seats.

19. (C) Compensatory seat distribution is still the wild card. Current totals point to very few of the 45 compensatory seats being allocated in a "compensatory fashion"; i.e., to parties that couldn't win a seat in the governorate, but that received enough votes nation wide to merit this special seat designation. Barring this designation, the rest of the "compensatory" seats would be distributed proportionally to the big winners who win a threshold number of votes. This may add to the Shia Alliance seat gains, and could give the Shia Coalition list close to 130 seats and make it possible for them to join with only the Kurds and reach the 2/3 parliament vote needed to name the next presidency council.

KHALILZAD